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Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty

Report of the Second Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 11 September 2000, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 24th, 25th, 30th and 41st meetings, on 25 and 31 October and on 6 December 2000. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/55/SR.24, 25, 30 and 41). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 3rd to 7th meetings, on 2, 3 and 5 October (see A/C.2/55/SR.3-7).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (A/55/407);

(b) Letter dated 5 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, transmitting the Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted by the South Summit of the Group of 77, held at Havana from 10 to 14 April 2000 (A/55/74);

(c) Letter dated 28 June 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the joint communiqué of the Tenth Summit of the Group of Fifteen, held at Cairo on 19 and 20 June 2000 (A/55/139-E/2000/93);

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(d) Letter dated 1 August 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué Okinawa 2000 adopted by the Group of Eight on 23 July 2000 (A/55/257-S/2000/766);

(e) Letter dated 17 August 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/55/310);

(f) Letter dated 8 September 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting, inter alia, the Brasilia communiqué adopted on 1 September 2000 by the Presidents of the South American countries (A/55/375).

4. At the 24th meeting, on 25 October, an introductory statement was made by the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (see A/C.2/55/SR.24).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/55/L.18 and A/C.2/55/L. 51

5. At the 30th meeting, on 31 October, the representative of Nigeria, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), including the establishment of the World Solidarity Fund for Poverty Eradication" (A/C.2/55/L.18), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 47/196 of 22 December 1992, by which it established the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, as well as its resolution 48/183 of 21 December 1993, by which it proclaimed 1996 the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty,

"*Recalling also* its resolution 50/107 of 20 September 1995 on the observance of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty and the proclamation of the first Decade of the United Nations for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006),

"*Expressing its deep concern* that the number of people living in extreme poverty continues to increase, with women and children constituting the majority and the most affected group, in particular in African countries and the least developed countries,

"*Recognizing* that, while the rate of poverty in some countries has been reduced, some developing countries and disadvantaged groups are being marginalized, others are at risk of being marginalized and effectively excluded from the benefits of globalization, and there is increased income disparity among and within countries, thereby constraining efforts to eradicate poverty,

"*Also recognizing* that for the poverty eradication strategy to be effective it is imperative for developing countries to be integrated into the world economy and equitably share the benefits of globalization,

"*Bearing in mind* the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, and the Political declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session, entitled 'World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalized world' (Geneva, 26-30 June 2000),

"*Bearing in mind also* the Millennium Declaration adopted by heads of State and Government on the occasion of the Millennium Summit, particularly section III, 'Development and poverty eradication', and its emphasis on solidarity as a fundamental and universal value in international relations in the twenty-first century,

"*Recalling* the commitment made by the heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit to eradicate extreme poverty, in particular the commitment to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger,

"*Recognizing* that, while it is the primary responsibility of States to attain social development, the international community should support the efforts of the developing countries to eradicate poverty and to ensure basic social protection,

"*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006),

"1. *Stresses* that the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty should contribute to achieving the targets of halving, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger;

"2. *Calls* for strengthened efforts at all levels to implement fully and effectively the relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations and all agreements and commitments adopted at United Nations major conferences and summits organized since 1990, as well as the Millennium Declaration, as they relate to the eradication of poverty;

"3. *Stresses* the importance of tackling the root causes of poverty and the necessity of meeting the basic needs of all and, in this context, emphasizes the fundamental role in the eradication of poverty of strong and sustained economic growth that favours the poor, creates substantive expansion in productive opportunities and employment, increases incomes, promotes equitable income distribution and minimizes environmental degradation;

"4. *Recognizes* the importance of the adoption of appropriate policy responses to the challenges of globalization at the national level, in particular by pursuing sound and stable domestic policies, including sound macroeconomic and social policies, in order to realize the objective of the eradication of poverty;

"5. *Reaffirms* that, within the context of overall action for the eradication of poverty, special attention should be given to the multidimensional nature of poverty and the national and international

conditions and policies that are conducive to its eradication by fostering, inter alia, the social and economic integration of people living in poverty, thus empowering them to participate in decision-making with regard to the policies that affect them, the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including the right to development, and an efficient and accountable public service and administration;

"6. *Calls upon* all Governments to take concrete action to formulate and implement their national poverty alleviation strategies with a view to achieving the goal of halving by 2015 the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger;

"7. *Urges* the strengthening of international assistance to developing countries in their efforts to alleviate poverty, including by creating an enabling environment that would facilitate the integration of developing countries into the world economy, improving their market access, facilitating the flow of financial resources and implementing fully and effectively all initiatives already launched regarding debt relief for developing countries, and emphasizes that the international community should consider further measures that would lead to effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries so that they can share equally in the benefits of globalization, cope with its negative effects, avoid being marginalized in the process of globalization and achieve full integration into the world economy;

"8. *Reaffirms* that all Governments and the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty, at both the national and international levels, and encourages the use of gender analysis as a tool for the integration of a gender dimension into planning the implementation of policies, strategies and programmes for the eradication of poverty;

"9. *Calls upon* the developed countries to strengthen their efforts to achieve, as soon as possible, the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for overall official development assistance and, where agreed, within that target, to earmark 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national product for the least developed countries;

"10. *Decides* to establish a World Solidarity Fund for Poverty Eradication, which will contribute to the eradication of poverty and to the promotion of social and human development in the poorest regions of the world;

"11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to undertake the necessary consultations with Member States and all relevant stakeholders on the modalities and operations of the Fund, bearing in mind the voluntary nature of the contributions;

"12. *Calls upon* the developed countries, by means of intensified and effective cooperation with developing countries, to promote capacity-building and to facilitate access to and transfer of technologies and corresponding knowledge, in particular by developing countries, on favourable terms,

including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights, as well as the special needs of developing countries, by identifying and implementing practical steps to ensure the achievement of progress in this regard and to assist developing countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty in an era influenced in large measure by technology;

"13. *Emphasizes* the critical role of both formal and non-formal education and training and basic education in the empowerment of those living in poverty;

"14. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the United Nations system to assign priority to the eradication of poverty and to enhance cooperation and, in this regard, encourages the entities of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions and other partners in development, to continue to support all Member States in carrying forward their own strategy for the achievement of the objectives of the Decade;

"15. *Welcomes also* the efforts made to implement the 20/20 initiative, which emphasizes that promoting access for all to basic social services is essential for sustainable and equitable development and is an integral part of the strategy for the eradication of poverty;

"16. *Urges* the implementation of the enhanced programme of assistance to heavily indebted poor countries without delay and the cancellation of all the official bilateral debt of those countries in return for their making a demonstrable commitment to poverty reduction as part of their overall development strategy;

"17. *Recognizes* the difficulties of heavily indebted middle-income developing countries and other heavily indebted middle-income countries in meeting their external debt and debt-servicing obligations, and notes the worsening situation in some of them in the context, inter alia, of greater liquidity constraints, which may require debt treatment, including, as appropriate, debt-reduction measures that will assist them in their efforts to combat poverty effectively;

"18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-sixth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

"19. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session the item entitled 'Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)'."

6. At the 41st meeting, on 6 December, the Chairman of the Committee, on behalf of the Vice-Chairman, Navid Hanif (Pakistan), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), including the initiative to establish a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication" (A/C.2/55/L.51), submitted by the Vice-Chairman on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.18.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.51 (see para. 9).

8. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.51, draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.18 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

9. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), including the initiative to establish a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 47/196 of 22 December 1992, by which it established the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, as well as its resolution 48/183 of 21 December 1993, by which it proclaimed 1996 the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty,

Recalling also its resolution 50/107 of 20 September 1995 on the observance of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty and the proclamation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), as well as the declarations and programmes of action of the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s as they relate to the eradication of poverty,

Expressing its deep concern that the number of people living in extreme poverty continues to increase, with women and children constituting the majority and the most affected group, in particular in African countries and the least developed countries,

Recognizing that, while the rate of poverty in some countries has been reduced, some developing countries and disadvantaged groups are being marginalized and others are at risk of being marginalized and effectively excluded from the benefits of globalization, resulting in increased income disparity among and within countries, thereby constraining efforts to eradicate poverty,

Also recognizing that for the poverty eradication strategy to be effective it is imperative for developing countries to be integrated into the world economy and equitably share the benefits of globalization,

Bearing in mind the Copenhagen Declaration[1] and Programme of Action[2] adopted by the World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, and the Political Declaration[3] adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session, entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalized world", held at Geneva from 26 to 30 June 2000, as well as the objectives of the World Food Summit, held in Rome from 13 to 17 November 1996,

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[1] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

[3] Resolution S-24/2, annex, sect. 1.

Bearing in mind also the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[4] adopted by heads of State and Government on the occasion of the Millennium Summit, particularly section III, "Development and poverty eradication", and its emphasis on solidarity as a fundamental value in international relations in the twenty-first century,

Recalling the commitment made by the heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit to eradicate extreme poverty, in particular the commitment to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger,

Recognizing that, while it is the primary responsibility of States to attain social development, the international community should support the efforts of the developing countries to eradicate poverty and to ensure basic social protection,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006),[5]

1. *Stresses* that the United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty should contribute to achieving the targets of halving, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, through decisive national action and strengthened international cooperation;

2. *Calls* for strengthened efforts at all levels to implement fully and effectively the relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations and all agreements and commitments adopted at the major United Nations conferences and summits organized since 1990, as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration, as they relate to the eradication of poverty, with a view to achieving tangible results;

3. *Stresses* the importance of tackling the root causes of poverty and the necessity of meeting the basic needs of all and, in this context, emphasizes the fundamental role in the eradication of poverty of strong and sustained economic growth that favours the poor, creates substantive expansion in productive opportunities and employment, increases incomes, promotes equitable income distribution and minimizes environmental degradation;

4. *Reaffirms* that the causes of poverty should be addressed in an integrated way, taking into account the importance of sectoral strategies in such areas as education, development of human resources, health, human settlements, rural development, productive employment, population, environment, freshwater, food security and migration, and the specific needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, in such a way as to increase opportunities and choices for people living in poverty and to enable them to build and to strengthen their assets so as to achieve social and economic development;

5. *Also stresses* the importance of increasing access to and control by the poor over resources, including land, skills, knowledge, capital and social connections, and of improving access for all to basic social services;

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[4] Resolution 55/2.

[5] A/55/407.

6. *Recognizes* the importance of the adoption of appropriate policy responses to the challenges of globalization at the national level, in particular by pursuing sound and stable domestic policies, including sound macroeconomic and social policies, in order to realize the objective of the eradication of poverty;

7. *Reaffirms* that, within the context of overall action for the eradication of poverty, special attention should be given to the multidimensional nature of poverty and the national and international conditions and policies that are conducive to its eradication, fostering, inter alia, the social and economic integration of people living in poverty, thus empowering them to participate in decision-making with regard to the policies that affect them, the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including the right to development, bearing in mind the relationship between all human rights and development, and an efficient, transparent and accountable public service and administration;

8. *Reaffirms*, as set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, that success in meeting the objectives of development and poverty eradication depends, inter alia, on good governance within each country; it also depends on good governance at the international level, on transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems and on commitment to an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system;

9. *Calls upon* all countries to formulate and implement outcome-oriented national strategies and programmes, setting time-bound targets for poverty reduction, including the target of halving, by 2015, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, which requires strengthening of national action and international cooperation;

10. *Urges* the strengthening of international assistance to developing countries in their efforts to alleviate poverty, including by creating an enabling environment that would facilitate the integration of developing countries into the world economy, improving their market access, facilitating the flow of financial resources and implementing fully and effectively all initiatives already launched regarding debt relief for developing countries, and emphasizes that the international community should consider further measures that would lead to effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries so that they can share equally in the benefits of globalization, cope with its negative effects, avoid being marginalized from the process of globalization and achieve full integration into the world economy;

11. *Reaffirms* that all Governments and the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty, at both the national and international levels, and encourages the use of gender analysis as a tool for the integration of a gender dimension into planning the implementation of policies, strategies and programmes for the eradication of poverty;

12. *Expresses its appreciation* to the developed countries that have agreed to and have reached the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for overall official development assistance, and calls upon the developed countries that have not yet done so to strengthen their efforts to achieve, as soon as possible, the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for overall official development

assistance and, where agreed, within that target, to earmark 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national product for the least developed countries;

13. *Reaffirms* the role of the United Nations funds and programmes, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, in assisting the national efforts of developing countries, including in the eradication of poverty, and the need for their funding in accordance with relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

14. *Welcomes favourably* the proposal submitted regarding the establishment of a world solidarity fund for poverty eradication, which will contribute to the eradication of poverty and to the promotion of social and human development in the poorest regions of the world, and requests the Secretary-General to undertake the necessary consultations with Member States and all relevant stakeholders on this issue, bearing in mind the voluntary nature of the contributions, and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session;

15. *Emphasizes* the role of microcredit as an important anti-poverty tool that promotes the generation of production and self-employment and empowers people living in poverty, especially women, and therefore encourages Governments to adopt policies that support the development of microcredit institutions and their capacities, and calls upon the international community, in particular the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and international and regional financial institutions involved in the eradication of poverty, to support and explore the incorporation of the microcredit approach into their programmes and the further development, as appropriate, of other microfinance instruments;

16. *Calls upon* the developed countries, by means of intensified and effective cooperation with developing countries, to promote capacity-building and facilitate access to and transfer of technologies and corresponding knowledge, in particular to developing countries, on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights, as well as the special needs of developing countries, by identifying and implementing practical steps to ensure the achievement of progress in this regard and to assist developing countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty in an era influenced in large measure by technology;

17. *Emphasizes* the critical role of both formal and non-formal education, particularly basic education, and training, in particular for girls, in the empowerment of those living in poverty and, in this context, welcomes the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum held at Dakar from 26 to 28 April 2000, including the reconfirmation of the mandate of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to coordinate Education for All partners and maintain their collective momentum, and invites the organs and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, to promote the inclusion of education in anti-poverty strategies;

18. *Recalls* the commitments of the United Nations conferences and summits to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, and to promote universal primary education in all countries by 2015 and, in this regard, urges Member States to take immediate measures to remove obstacles to young girls' school attendance and to reduce drop-out rates;

19. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the United Nations system to assign priority to the eradication of poverty and to enhance coordination and, in this regard, encourages the organizations of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and other partners in development to continue to support all Member States in carrying forward their own strategy for the achievement of the objectives of the Decade;

20. *Reaffirms* the importance of agreeing on a mutual commitment of interested developed and developing country partners to allocate, on average, 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of the national budget, respectively, to basic social programmes, and welcomes the efforts made to implement the 20/20 initiative, which emphasizes that promoting access for all to basic social services is essential for sustainable and equitable development and is an integral part of the strategy for the eradication of poverty;

21. *Recognizes* the devastating effect of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on human development, economic growth and poverty reduction efforts in many countries, in particular African countries, and urges Governments and the international community to give urgent priority to the HIV/AIDS crisis, in particular addressing the special needs of developing countries by strengthening the relevant commitments through partnerships as agreed by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session, and, in this regard, welcomes the convening of a special session of the General Assembly to review and address the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects;

22. *Urges* the implementation of the enhanced programme of debt relief to the heavily indebted poor countries without delay and the cancellation of all the official bilateral debt of those countries, in the context of poverty eradication, in return for their making a demonstrable commitment to poverty reduction as part of their overall development strategy;

23. *Recognizes* the difficulties of heavily indebted middle-income developing countries in meeting their external debt and debt-servicing obligations, and notes the worsening situation in some of them in the context, inter alia, of greater liquidity constraints, which may require debt treatment through various national and international measures designed to assist these countries to make their debt burden sustainable in the long term and to combat poverty effectively;

24. *Encourages* the continuing examination in all relevant intergovernmental forums of ways and means to integrate poverty reduction objectives and strategies into discussions on international financial and development issues;

25. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in the context of the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration, to submit to it at its fifty-sixth session a comprehensive report containing an evaluation of progress made towards achieving the goals of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), as well as in the achievement of the 2015 targets on poverty reduction, and recommendations for further action to achieve the 2015 targets, including the identification of resource requirements and possible sources of funding;

26. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-sixth session the item entitled "Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)".